The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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Hope is brightest when it dawns from fears.—Sir Walter Scott.

WHOLE NO. 1006. WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1930 FRANK MORRISON, Secretary VOL. 20, NO. 19.

CONTRACT SMASHED BY STEEL ERECTORS

New York, July 19.—The Structural Steel Board of Trade smashed its agreement with the International Association of Structural Iron Workers before the ink was dry.

"We entered into this contract in good faith and we shall insist upon its observance," said P. J. Morrin, general president of the international union, in a letter to these employers.

The agreement was signed following a quarter of a century dispute. The employers are linked up with the American Bridge Company, a unit of the steel trust. They have operated with non-union structural iron workers since 1905.

Former Governor Smith, last March, opened negotiations when the new Empire State building in this city was being erected by non-unionists. The union had called strikes in Newark and Cleveland against the contracting firm.

President Green and Secretary Frank Morrison of the A. F. of L. assisted President Morrin in the negotiations. The agreement included a provision that any dispute the interested parties failed to adjust would be referred to President Green, who would make a decision.

It was believed the long fight had ended and that peace had finally come to the iron erecting industry in this area. The employers shattered this hope.

"The Structural Steel Board of Trade regards their honorable obligations very lightly," said President Morrin. "The public will expect better and more sufficient reasons for the failure of the Structural Steel Board of Trade to meet its obligations and to demonstrate to the public, and especially the building industry, its good faith in this matter."

UNIONISTS START WAR ON N. Y. RACKETEERS

New York, July 19.—The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has started a war on labor racketeers. Employers have been mulcted out of $2,000,000 a year and trade union officials are assaulted when they combat the evil.

The unionists, headed by International President Schlesinger and Secretary-Treasurer Dubinsky, asked the District Attorney's office to aid in the fight.

With the successful ending of the dress strike, last spring, gangsters represent to manufacturers that they can "protect" them against the union. Other racketeers, representing themselves as petty union officials, extract tribute on the pretense that they can make union conditions non-operative.

David Fruhling, a member of the union who has been active against the racketeers, was stabbed by five men while on his way to the union headquarters. The union offered a reward of $2,000 for the arrest and conviction of the assailants.

"All decent elements in the dress industry are united against racketeering," said President Schlesinger.

"Employers who are intimidated by gangsters into paying tribute or who believe they can evade union conditions by dealing with a lawless element, only contribute to a disorder which all legitimate factors are seeking to end."

FIREWORKS PLANT SECURED NO LICENSE

Trenton, N. J., July 19.—Explosion of a fireworks plant at Neptune, in which four persons lost their lives, revealed that the plant operated 17 years without a license.

The fireworks were manufactured in a "home" factory. Thomas Hall, Deputy Commissioner of Labor, who investigated the case, reports "it is very unfortunate" that the owner of the plant did not acquaint State officials with his operation.

MANY IDLE IN BRITAIN

London, England, July 19.—Britain is alarmed over its growing army of unemployed that now numbers 1,800,600. This is an increase of 75,300 for the week. There is no improvement in the coal, iron and steel industries. Slight increases are noted in cotton goods.

MORE GAS; LESS COST

New York, July 19.—Leading oil companies, headed by Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, combined to control the future of a new process capable of yielding two barrels of gasoline where only one could be had before.

MORE UNEMPLOYMENT "STATISTICS"

The Department of Commerce is again offending common sense by putting forth alleged figures of unemployment which it would be misusing a good word to call statistics. Pending the tabulation of census information on the subject, the department says that all the authority of the United States Government that partial returns from "six States" indicate that "less than 5 per cent of the population is needing work."

The Morrison" of the week for wages. A certain proportion of the population normally does. That proportion engaged in gainful occupations has probably not changed much from the 1920 census, when it was just under 40 per cent. Assume that percentage now, and the departmental 5 per cent at once becomes 5 per cent of the gainfully employed. But these, again, include ag'cultural labor, professional work and domestic service, in which there is little unemployment.

Factory and structural unemployment must rise to a much higher percentage—how much higher we do not undertake to say. It is enough that by general agreement between two and three million workers are out of a job.

And what are the six States serving as samples in this computation? Con the list carefully. They are Utah, Idaho, Montana, Arkansas, Florida and Kansas! Cold comfort for the union-labor workers in Eastern and near Middle States whose percentage of unemployment, according to President Green's statement to the Senate Committee on Commerce, rose during the winter to a peak of 22. Naturally there has been seasonal improvement since then. But the value of the Department of Commerce "statistics" as showing present conditions is exactly none at all. It is an insult to intelligence to put them out.—New York World.

LABOR'S NON-PARTISAN PLAN APPLIED BY OTHER CITIZENS

When organized labor declares it "rewards its friends and punishes its enemies," it takes the same position in politics as other groups of citizens.

Labor's policy does not differ from business interests, wets, drys, or other elements.

These elements may not voice our slogan, but they apply it. Citizens are not expected to vote for candidates who disagree with them.

Labor Party advocates who oppose our non-partisanship cling to the European ideal—that government is apart from the people.

This system is applicable where class stratification is clear-cut, but in this country the people are sovereign. The preamble of the American Constitution declares: "We, the people of the United States."

Government in Europe, is supreme. This makes these people politically minded. Americans do not have that faith in political parties and government. That they often fail to exercise their sovereignty does not affect the principle. Final power rests in them and they develop a public opinion to which their lawmaking representatives respond.

Labor's policy of "rewarding our friends" fits into the American ideal, which is not understood by those who talk of a Labor Party, and who constantly refer to Europe as a guide for conditions here that are wholly dissimilar.

Political partisanship in the United States is at its lowest ebb in 100 years. All semblance of party spirit is destroyed and various groups now openly favor labor's policy of voting for men who represent their views—of voting for their friends.

The National Association of Manufacturers presents its "bill of grievances" to the conventions of political parties. Both wets and drys take similar action and publicly declare they will work and vote against candidates who do not agree with them.

Opponents of the A. F. of L. non-partisan policy call this a "begging" policy—when applied to wage earners. They conveniently overlook that it is a national characteristic.

The A. F. of L. non-partisan plan, when first advocated, was called "intimidation." Its practice is now country-wide.

Labor Party advocates also overlook the important point that trade unionists claim there is no such thing as "labor legislation"—that is, that all legislation urged by labor has a direct bearing on the nation's welfare.

The labor injunction was formerly considered a "labor" issue, but equity's encroachment into business and control of the press has placed the injunction in its true light.

The abolition of child labor, unemployment, dependent old age and other problems extend beyond the confines of labor.

A solution of these problems depend upon a new social consciousness of all the people. Voters of all parties must be appealed to—if results, rather than the exaltation of a few individuals, is desired.

Child Labor Harmful To Youth; System Has No Economic Value

Washington, July 19.—Child labor is detrimental to growth and physical development, deprives the individual of education, limits his development as a citizen and is industrially wasteful, says the United States Children's Bureau, following a survey of this problem.

The Bureau finds that premature employment occurs during the years of great growth when the body is peculiarly liable to overstrain, and since much of the work that children do involves overstrain of one kind or another, physicians believe that employment during adolescence is detrimental to normal physical development.

A study of the health of employed continuation school children in New York State discloses that 28 per cent of the defects found among them were accentuated by their work.

Tuberculosis among boys 15 to 19 years of age employed in Fall River, Mass., cotton mills was nearly double that of boys not so employed, and among girls was far more than double that of girls not so employed.

A comparable study in this kind in Cincinnati led to the conclusion that school life favors general physical vigor and vitality more than working life between the ages of 14 and 18.

Children are more prone to accidents than are adults. The formers' imperfect co-ordination of muscle renders them more liable to make some movement leading to injuries, it was explained.

Impaired development, ill health, deficiency in physical vigor and efficiency result in low earning power, in premature old age, to the employer in loss of industrial efficiency in the workers and to society in the physical deterioration of the race.

In final survey of the results of child labor, attention was called to an industrial waste corresponding to the physical detriment of premature employment. A subnormal race of adult workers results from the stunted physical development and juvenile intelligence follows the lack of school training.

SHORTER WORK DAY BEST IDLE SOLUTION

St. Paul, Minn., July 19.—A shorter work day is the best solution of unemployment, said Governor Christianson on his return from the governors' conference at Salt Lake City.

He said the general opinion among attending State Executives was that shortening the work day is the most feasible plan offered so far.

"If employers do not solve the situation themselves, either by shortening the work day or by some other method, political pressure will, within a short time, force the adoption of unemployment pension laws," said the governor.

WHEAT PRICES SAG; FEDERAL AID FAILS

Washington, July 19.—The Administration's farm relief plan has resulted in a loss of $15,000,000 to the Government and the price of wheat is lower than at any time since the World War.

The Federal Farm Board bought 70,000,000 bushels of wheat in a futile effort to check sagging prices. The Administration rejected Senator Capper's suggestion that an additional 100,000,000 bushels be bought.

Government officials are calling on Southwestern farmers to withhold wheat, as stocks now in storage will be increased by this larger output. Northwestern farmers heeded the warning but plant less, but the Southwestern farmers ignored the call.

The Government's activity in farm relief, and the spending of millions of dollars to hold prices, is a contrast to former pleas against all forms of paternalism by men who now urge the new policy.

NEW YORK EMPLOYMENT DROPS TO LOWER LEVEL

New York, July 19.—The index number of factory employment in this State dropped 2.6 per cent to 86.7, the lowest point ever recorded, according to Miss Frances Perkins, State Industrial Commissioner.

The number of workers were nearly 2 per cent less in June than in May, the statement said, and the years 1921 and 1924 are the only other years when the decreases from May to June were as great as this year.

ANTI-UNIONISTS FAIL TO TERRIFY WORKERS

Huntsville, Ala., July 19.—Anti-unionists in this section overplayed their hand when they attempted to terrify textile workers from joining the union.

The workers and the public generally suddenly realized these employers were making their lurid anti-union claims to continue their "prosperous poverty," known as pauper wages.

The recent anti-union attack by a local newspaper has proven a boomerang and there has been a remarkable change in the public attitude toward organized labor.

Merchants have grown weary of hearing claims that Huntsville labor is "generally employed." This is true, but they receive no wages, and thus are poor customers.

Local business men have addressed mass meetings of workers, or written to union officials, who were commended for their organizing efforts by Alva Smith, manager. Then these merchants were inveigled into signing full-page advertisements declaring for the anti-union drive.

There are 10,000 textile workers in the Huntsville district and they are joining the union at the rate of 200 a day. Other craftsmen have been affected by the trade union wave and several new locals, such as carpenters, painters, machinists and barbers, are functioning.

GOMPERS HIGH SCHOOL TO OPEN IN NEW YORK

New York, July 19.—Plans for the new Samuel Gompers Industrial High School for Boys are being completed and construction is expected to begin in the Fall.

The building will cost $1,680,000 and will seat 1,700 students.

The equipment will include a radio room, press, linotype and composing rooms, as well as shops of every description. It will have telephone, motor and dynamo, electric light and power, and auto transmission and chassis shops and architectural drawing rooms.

NEGRO LABOR UNITING IN SOUTHERN STATES

Birmingham, Ala., July 19.—Negro workers are joining Federal unions by the hundreds since the A. F. of L. Southern Organizing Committee has been in operation.

More than 4,000 Negro longshoremen in New Orleans have affiliated, and the new membership of Negro workers in the Birmingham district is 4,800.

Negro organizers are being employed by the A. F. of L. committee.

CHILDS' DIRES MAKERS PREPARING FOR STRIKE

New York, July 19.—Organized children's dress makers are arranging for a strike to destroy sweat shop conditions.

These workers are affiliated to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. A committee of 500 has been formed as a preliminary to the city-wide walkout if employers refuse to confer. More than 300 shops will be affected.

LABOR PARTY ESCAPES DEFEAT BY THREE VOTES

London, England, July 19.—Premier MacDonald and the Labor Party escaped defeat by the narrow margin of three votes on the question of amending the income tax bill. Labor Party members declared the change would be "an unblushing subsidy" to banks, breweries and wealthy individuals that would amount to $150,000,000 a year.

The Labor Party cleared that hurdle when they met defeat in the House of Lords on the much-discussed coal bill. As it is practically certain that the Labor Party will reject the House of Lords' plan, no action on the coal bill is probable.

Premier MacDonald is believed to be willing to hold a general election on the action of the House of Lords.

His battle cry would be: "The peers vs. the people."

Lines are tightening in the House of Commons because of Labor's three-vote victory that has ended talk of unity between the Labor Party and the Liberals, led by former Premier Lloyd George.

The Labor Party can be ousted any time the half hundred Liberals join with the Conservatives, but these parties are divided. The Conservatives, led by former Premier Stanley Baldwin, are split over the question of tariff on foodstuffs. The younger Conservatives insist that the Labor Party be ousted and that a general election be held, but Baldwin and the older Conservatives are fearful of the outcome because of general unemployment, their attempts to protect powerful interests from additional taxation and the proposal to tax foodstuffs.

That the older Conservatives may be correct in their estimate of public opinion is shown by the election of Lady Noel Buxton, who was returned to Parliament as a Labor Party member. She defeated her Conservative opponent in an off election that attracted country-wide attention.

COLORADO BEET FIELDS INVADED BY FILIPINOS

Denver, July 19.—Filipinos are being rushed into Colorado beet fields to block organization of these workers, it is claimed.

The Great Western Sugar Company notified employees that "none of you need expect that the company will furnish provisions on credit the coming winter either in the factories or in Denver."

Low wages and uncertain employment were formerly met by the company in the form of credit, but this winter charity organizations will be called upon more often.

At the recent conference of the National Catholic Welfare Council in this city much time was devoted to a discussion of conditions in the beet fields. More than a score of workers testified to deplorable work conditions and the wretched family life of these employes.

8 HOURS IN ARGENTIA

Washington, July 19.—A legal eight-hour work day and a 48-hour week is in force throughout Argentina, according to information received by the Department of Commerce.

The Argentina Labor Department has organized a service of vigilance in all parts of the country to enforce the law.

MacDonald, Mooney Perjurer, Found; He Blames Police For False Testimony

Baltimore, July 19.—John MacDonald, perjurer in the Mooney case, and one of the State's star witnesses, has been found in this city after a nation-wide search.

When he surrendered to the police he expressed a willingness to return to California and undo the wrong he committed. He made this statement:

"I, John MacDonald, aged 55 years, residing in Baltimore city, testified as a witness for the State of California versus Thomas Mooney and Warren K. Billings. I never saw Mooney until taken to the Hall of Justice in San Francisco, and was told by an officer that this was Mooney (pointing him out to me). My testimony in the various cases was untrue and false. I desire to undo the wrong done by me in sending Mooney to prison, regardless of personal consequences. The authorities got me to testify that I identified Mooney, but this is an absolute falsehood."

MacDonald, in 1921, made a similar affidavit, but was advised by friends of Mooney not to enter California, as he would be charged with perjury. This affidavit was ignored by the State Supreme Court in its recent ruling against Billings' pardon plea. Governor Young, in his refusal of Mooney's pardon plea, also ignored the 1921 affidavit, and insisted that MacDonald personally appear and prove his perjury. Friends of Mooney and Billings then took up the almost fruitless search of finding MacDonald, after a nine years' disappearance.

MacDonald was released from the Baltimore jail by State's Attorney Herbert O'Conor, who said:

"If 1929 life sentence imposed upon Mooney was based principally on MacDonald's testimony it would be monstrous to allow that sentence to stand. MacDonald gives a statement of reasons for having perjured himself in 1921 which, if true, reflect seriously upon the good faith of the authorities connected with the prosecution of Mooney."

Originally a waiter, MacDonald today has the appearance of a broken old man. His hair is white, his face pale and his eyes bloodshot. Doubled up with rheumatism, he hobbled about the police station on a cane, incessantly smoking cigarettes.

CAUSE FOR DEPRESSION

Overproduction is accepted among thinking persons as the cause for the present business depression.

Former declines were blamed on "high" wages, politics, or other reasons. People now see we are producing more than we can buy and manufacturers close their plants because of a lack of sales.

When people agree as to facts of a social ill they have made the first step toward a solution.

This knowledge is of inestimable value to organized workers in their movement for higher wages and a shorter work day.

It is now being understood that high wages and shorter hours is beneficial not only to wage earners, but to every group.

CAN'T THIS APPLY TO LABOR?

An "ungovernable surplus production has wrecked many an industry," said Secretary of Agriculture Hyde, in urging farmers to unite and limit production, as is the rule among industrial captains.

"We work 365 days a year, every fellow for himself, refuse to cooperate with anybody, produce a surplus—and reap a declining standard of living."

Why can't that argument apply to wage workers? Why is the power of government not thrown against the policy of splitting wage workers and speeding up production, while a contrary rule applies in every other walk of life?

Why is the slightest tendency of workers to unite resisted?

The reason, of course, is that men still secretly hold to the serf concept and the fear that workers may challenge more than one wrong if the principle of organized labor is frankly accepted.

Let all groups but labor unite, and grant the interests of labor with a paternal care, seems to be the system.

WAGNER PLAN DELAYED FOR MONEY SHORTAGE

Washington, July 19.—Congress passed the Wagner bill which provides for the collection of unemployment statistics, but voted no money to make the act effective.

This compilation must be made by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Ethelbert Stewart, Commissioner of the Bureau, says that his department has recently been forced to curtail its endeavors and has reduced its staff because of a lack of money.

"The Wagner bill," said the veteran statistician, "carried no authorization for an appropriation. No money can be had, therefore, the Congress makes an appropriation after it reconvenes in December."

CANADIAN RAIL CHIEF WOULD BAR IMMIGRANTS

Toronto, Ontario, July 19.—Immigration into Canada from the United States and Europe should be stopped, said E. W. Beatty, president Canadian Pacific Railway, in an interview here.

The railroad chief insists that employment conditions make it necessary for the Dominion to protect its interests.

R. R. RATES ADVANCED

Washington, July 19.—Railroads were awarded substantial freight rate increases by the Interstate Commerce Commission while workers "enjoy" layoffs and are resisting wage reductions.

Eastern roads will profit from $40,000,000 to $60,000,000 annually and western trunk lines will gain between $10,000,000 and $12,000,000.

The commission's order involves freight classifications, but "the public pays."

FEDERAL LAWMAKERS BLOCK RAIL MERGERS

Washington, July 19.—A remarkable change has come over members of Congress on the question of railroad consolidations.

The Transportation Act of 1920 authorizes the Interstate Commerce Commission to unite carriers into a few gigantic systems. This theory has been rejected by the lawmakers who have discovered holding companies, that are outside the jurisdiction of the Interstate Commerce Commission, control stock of many railroads. Combinations would also destroy railroad towns and communities and increase the army of unemployed.

The Senate passed the Couzens resolution which prohibits consolidations up to a certain fixed date. The House Committee accepted the principle and agreed that the intefests of labor should be protected.

The next session of Congress, it is predicted, will pass legislation to bring holding companies under the Interstate Commerce Commission, but that railroads be left alone. Holding companies are launched by financiers who secure railroad stock in the open market and are in a position to dictate railroad policies.

Railroad employes show that the consolidation would make a desert of many localities. Business of all description would be destroyed and workers dismissed.

TO PAY MINIMUM WAGE

Akron, Ohio, July 19.—The city council approved a minimum wage of 50 cents an hour on municipal work. It was stated that rates as low as 25 cents is paid.

RUSSIAN COAL NOT USED

Washington, July 19.—"None of our vessels transport Russian coal nor do our vessels use Russian coal as fuel," said the management of the United States Lines in a letter to President Green.

The company denies rumors in the anthracite region that its ships are importing this coal.

SHOP MEN LAID OFF

New York, July 19.—More than 4,000 shop men in the Erie Buffalo, West Albany, Depew and Avis have been laid off for 10 days by the New York Central Railroad. On August 1,000, it is estimated, will be laid off in shops west of Buffalo.

GOVERNOR TRUMBULL URGES SHORTER DAY

Salt Lake City, July 19.—"The work day should be reduced so that employment can be spread out sufficiently to provide work for everybody," said Governor Trumbull of Connecticut, at the closing session of the Governors' Conference in this city.

"Mass production is responsible to a great extent for unemployment," said Governor Trumbull. "Statistics tell us that one workman produces as much as 92 workmen produced 75 years ago. In other words, one man today, working one hour, produces as much as one man working 32 hours did 75 years ago. Our ability to consume necessities, at least, has not been on the same basis.

"This situation is going to become more and more acute. The only immediate answer that is seen is a shortening of the productive hours per day.

"It has been estimated that employes working four hours a day normally can produce all the necessities, all the luxuries, make additions to surplus capital and still enjoy all the things that we have in the past, and that the work hours per day required will become less and less as mass production and mechanization of industry, increases and grows.

"We are going through a transitory period from the old hand method of production in New England into the machine age and we are going still further into it. There is not an industry in the East that I know of that is not overcrowded."

DEMAND FOR PAPERS REOPENS OLD FEUD

Washington, July 19.—The historic feud between the Senate and the Chief Executive is again raging.

The Senate wants all correspondence in connection with the London naval conference. The treaty is before the Senate for ratification and a minority bill that these papers should be forthcoming as the Constitution provides that the President shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties." This clause, the minority holds, makes the Senate partners with the President in every treaty and they refuse to sign a blank check in the belief that they may have secret understandings.

The President offered to submit all documents to Senators in confidence, but this is refused. Senators claim they, and not the Chief Executive, typify the people in this confidence, and that if they accept his plan they waive their constitutional prerogatives.

The Senate, as a concession, called on the President for the papers "if in his opinion they will not be inimical to the public interest." This was refused on the ground that many of the papers were given to the President in confidence.

The President insists that there are no secret understandings and again declares he will permit any Senator to read them in confidence.

Senator Norris offered a reservation to the treaty that it be ratified "with the distinct and explicit understanding" that there are "no secret understandings or agreements which in any way changed or modified it."

The Norris proposal is acceptable to the Administration, if amended.

UNIONS ARE "SELFISH" SAYS PRISON LABOR MAN

Concord, N. H., July 19.—Levin J. Chase, secretary New Hampshire Board of Prison Visitors, doesn't like the Hawes-Cooper Act, which goes into effect 1934, and which provides that when prison-made goods are shipped into another State, these goods come under the law of that State.

Mr. Chase said the "selfishness and illogical reasoning of labor unions, women's clubs and a group of manufacturers" made the law possible.

"No matter what the legislation, it is not possible to end competition between prison and free labor and it is worse than foolish to attempt it," said Mr. Chase.

He is quite clear through at the "selfishness" of organized labor.

LESS COTTON OUTPUT

Washington, July 19.—Cotton output represents a reduction of from 6 to 8 per cent from the total that would be planted, if the recent acreage trend had continued, said Carl Williams, member Federal Farm Board, representing cotton growers.

The Farm Board has insisted that the cotton growers curtail output.

INJUNCTION LEGISLATION PARAMOUNT

By WILLIAM GREEN
Editor American Federationist

The American Federation of Labor is much concerned for the enactment of injunction legislation by Congress. Regulation of the use of the injunction writ and elimination of government by injunction is of paramount importance to American labor. The injunction menace must be forthcoming as the Constitution provides that the President shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties." This clause, the minority holds, makes the Senate partners with the President in every treaty and they refuse to sign a blank check in the belief that they may have secret understandings.

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